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TRAVELS IN SEARCH OF LORD ROSSE'S TELESCOPE.

I WANTED to see Lord Rosse's telescope. I had heard a good deal about it, and, like everybody else, had a reasonable share of curiosity on the subject. Having, fortunately, a few weeks to spare early in October, I took the opportunity of visiting Ireland, mainly with the design of seeing this remarkable apparatus. The voyage from Liverpool was not particularly bad: in twelve hours we were safely landed at Kingston, and just in time for the railway train which was about to start for Dublin. In half an hour we were at the Gresham, Sackville Street, and comfortably domiciled in Ireland.

I have now been three times in Dublin, and have always gone to the Gresham: the first time from necessity, and the last two times from gratitude. Many years ago, in crossing from Holyhead, I lost my baggage—more correctly, bag; Gresham sympathised with, and was kind to me under my deprivation. Could I do less than always afterwards go to Gresham's, albeit Gresham has years ago retired, and left his hotel to others? Gresham deserved to make a fortune, as is pretty generally the case with those who enjoy this kind of luck. Originally a foundling, picked up on the steps of the Royal Exchange, London—whence, I believe, his adoption of a name—reared first as a boots, and then advanced to the position of waiter, he rose, by persevering industry and unconquerable politeness, to be the proprietor of the largest hotel in Dublin. I remember being very much struck with the magnificence of the concern in 1827, and it is still a good house, though on a somewhat reduced scale.

Dublin is a very delightful city, and any one can kill a week in it in a very satisfactory manner. I made away with pretty nearly two; and of what I saw during that extended period, something may possibly be said some other time. The thing I have at present to talk about is Lord Rosse's telescope, though we must go through some preliminary chat before coming to it. This wonderful machine is a good way from Dublin, as much as seventy-eight miles in a direction towards the centre of Ireland, and, as I can prove, it is quite a feat getting to it. It is situated at Parsonstown, a name which strangers will perhaps find difficult to discover in any ordinary map, seeing that Parsonstown is only a modern designation adopted from the surname of the Rosse family, and that the old authorised name of the place is Birr.

Birr or Parsonstown, it is all one: the question was how we were to get to it. On making all due inquiries, I learned that the best way was to take a railway train to a certain town from thirty to forty miles off, and that there we should certainly get a stage-coach to carry us forward. Very reasonable-looking information this, considering that it was given by a clerk in a coach-office, who

might be presumed to know all about it; and, to show our confidence in the wisdom of this Solomon, we—that is, madame and myself—procured tickets for the promised coach.

Next morning, accordingly, we were off. It was as fine a day as any we had seen in Ireland. Supposing that the noble proprietor of the telescope will permit us to look into it, what a capital view of the moon we shall have to-night! This notion put us into remarkably good spirits, and disposed us to look indulgently on the peat mosses and other indigenous embellishments of the scenery as we hurried along on our journey. The railway, too, was really a wonderful work of art—not at all Irish in either construction or management: the gauge was just the thing—half way between the narrow and the broad: what nice carriages; the linings of tabinet: how easy one can sit; room for four on a side: I hope the concern pays; it deserves to be encouraged: with such railways Ireland will yet be a great country. Such benevolent communings lasted all through the cultivated and bog region, and brought us to that great flat expanse of natural sward called the Curragh of Kildare, through which the railway has been remorselessly cut. The Curragh was of course very much admired, not because it forms a first-rate race-course, of which fact a fellow-traveller spoke with national pride, but for its lively green pasture, on which lots of beautiful sheep—white-faced chevrots—were comfortably grazing.

Having passed the Curragh, nothing further attracted our attention till we arrived at our destined station—but where was the coach? Nothing of the wheel genus was visible but a wheelbarrow, and the wheelbarrow was declared to be engaged.

'Where,' said I to the ticket-taking man, 'is the coach to Parsonstown? I don't see it, unless, to be sure, it is that barrow there with the turf basket!'

'Ah, your honour, the coach is gone three hours sin'; that was the wrong train entirely you came by: there will be no coach now till Saturday.'

'Then what a clever person that was who sold me the tickets! Are there no sort of cars anywhere to be had? Where in all the world is the town?'

'Why, sir, there it is up yonder forment you,' pointing to a collection of mud hovels and houses, about three-quarters of a mile off, at the top of a rising-ground.

During this colloquy a crew of young tatterdemalions, any one of whom would have served as a ready-made scarecrow, were at gaze on the luggage, eager to act the part of porters; and selecting a couple of these obliging gosssoons, we trudged on behind them towards the venerable city before us.

The approach by which we ascended is through a suburb of mud-built cottages, the more aristocratic of which possess chimneys and windows; a middle order dispense with the windows; and an inferior grade seem to be satisfied with

having only a door—a common exit for men, women, children, pigs, and smoke. The Celts of Gaul had not a very different order of architecture. On disentangling ourselves from this suburban approach, in which, as travellers, we were objects of considerable interest, we made our debut in the grand Place of the town—a widish kind of street, crowded at the time with country people, carts, cattle, and other materials of a market-day, in which were included several stalls for the sale of men and women's apparel, having all the appearance of an importation from St Giles. Through this gay melange our two faithful gossons conducted us to the principal hotel in the place, a house with a tolerably brisk exterior, and a seductive promise of cars on the signboard.

Nor was the promise altogether a sham. The bustle of the landlord, a young man, whom I shall introduce as Mr Hyacinthe O'Bralagan, was inspiring. 'He had a car, which would be at our service in a moment; he would send for it immediately; it had only gone to bring home a cart of turf—well, since he thought of it, he would go and fetch it himself.' And so he did, and the horse was forthwith trotted up to the door, and yoked to a car by a variety of rope and leather fastenings. The faith of an Irishman is boundless. O'Bralagan, in producing this elegant equipage, had doubtless a sincere belief in its powers of locomotion. 'Both horse and car had been over the road fifty times, and they had never yet failed, thank God!' So, taking his word for it, off we set, bag and baggage, madame, by way of precaution against the jolts, holding firmly on by my right arm; while the seat on the other side, to keep the vessel in trim, was occupied by as queer a specimen of the Jehu species as ever 'druv' a kish from a bog. I have been told, for I haven't much personal knowledge of the subject, that there is no fear of Irish horses *reining*, provided you get them fairly under weigh, and a little warm in harness. The great thing is to set them a-going. I had somewhere heard of the application of a red-hot poker; but on the present occasion there was fortunately no need for this ancient, and, I hope, disused, incentive to locomotion. The blood of the poor hack was a little up, and, to do it justice, it did its very best to get on; the Place was cleared, in not bad style, and at a rough pace we wound our way through the western suburb of the town. Advancing on its journey, however, the animal began to see what was meditated; nothing less than a stage of fifteen or sixteen miles. This was a deception. On being coaxed into the journey, it had laboured under the natural impression that an excursion for turf to the nearest bog was all that was contemplated, whereas it was a regular car affair, with a couple of travellers—a whole day's work, without the slightest prospect of dinner. The more the horse seemed to reflect on this shameful usage, the slower it trotted; and the trot by and by declined into a spasmodic kind of walk.

'Hollos, Paddy! this wont do: we shall never get to our journey's end at this rate.'

'Never fare, yer honour.'

Whisk, and down went a thwack on the ribs of the indignant and unfortunate quadruped. Paddy's whip was a cudgel, and with this formidable instrument he proceeded to execute a regular battery of the poor animal. At every second step, and with a jerk of the rein, was uttered the premonitory *whisk*, and then down came the cudgel. It was a sorrowful spectacle—a contest of tyranny and suffering.

'I tell you, sirrah, this wont do: we must turn back.' No answer.

Whisk—thwack.

'Stop, I say stop; we shant go an inch farther; the horse is utterly incapable of the journey.'

Whisk—thwack.

'Stop this instant, I say, or I will make you: I command you to turn back!'

There was no little grumbling at this order, for Paddy was evidently unwilling to relinquish the job; but there being no use in temporising, the machine was turned round, and back we all came to the place of starting, greatly, I have no doubt, to the satisfaction of the horse,

but not less to the affected surprise of its proprietor, Mr O'Bralagan.

'What did you mean by sending out such an apology for a horse as this: the creature can scarcely stand!'

'Why, it went five-and-thirty miles yesterday.'

'Well, I shall not dispute the point. Had Mr O'Bralagan no better horse than this—surely he had!'

'No—yes; that is to say, certainly he had another horse, but it was not a car-horse; it was a hunter, kept for coursing, and he could not possibly send it out to-day, for he intended to take it out with the greyhounds to-morrow.'

This was Mr Hyacinthe O'Bralagan's notion of things. If he had a better horse, he resolved it should not be forthcoming, and that was to me the same thing as his having no horse at all.

'Were there no other horses for hire in the town?'

'Not a leg.'

'When does the train go back to Dublin?'

'Five o'clock.'

'Then get dinner ready, and we shall go and have a look at the town.'

We accordingly proceeded to view the more interesting objects of the town, some of which are of great antiquity, and deserving of a visit on their own account. From the ruins of an old religious house, which for some time engaged our attention, we went to look for a modern chapel, said to be worthy of the inspection of strangers. Sauntering, therefore, through the town in quest of this place of public devotion, we thought we had at length found it out. A building stood a short way back from the street, and in front of it were loitering a number of men and women who had come to market, while others stood half-filling up the doorway. As we approached the edifice, a strange noise seemed to come from the inside: it was a confused sound of voices, over which one, in a higher key, sharply prevailed.

'How ridiculous to take this for a chapel! it is an auction-room: let us go in and see what is going on.'

We accordingly made our way into the house, expecting to enjoy the fun of an Irish auction; and let our surprise be judged, when I mention that it was no more an auction-room than a chapel—it was a county court—bar, bench, and all the rest of the apparatus of justice.

'The judges all ranged, a terrible show,'

consisted of three justices of peace, gentlemen of the neighbourhood, as I understood them to be; and the culprit at the bar, in custody of half-a-dozen armed constabulary, had all the appearance of being a small farmer, a rough blade enough, but a thought more decent in apparel than the bulk of the assembly who looked on this curious array of power.

The case was pretty nearly over when we entered, and therefore we could not gather its precise merits; but it amounted to something like this—the accused party had been found guilty of driving his cow across the railway, and was accordingly liable to punishment under the statute. The discussion now going on respected the degree of punishment, mixed with splenetic remarks on the heinousness of the offence, and the culprit's audacity in challenging the justice of the decision. What a burlesque on the solemnity of justice! All the judges were speaking at once, as if trying to talk each other down. The line of defence or extenuation urged by the poor fellow at the bar struck me as remarkably reasonable; and what an exemplification was it of the prescriptive misusage of Ireland! He did not deny having crossed the railway, but the railway was in the first place to blame. He had always been in the habit of driving his cattle to the fields by a road in this direction, and this path had been blocked up by the railway without his consent. He was, in fact, done out of a road for his cows; and in his opinion it was a very hard case. Instead of being guilty of injuring the railway, the railway had been guilty of injuring him.

Here was exactly a case for the merciful exercise of authority; but Irish justice-of-peace courts are not remarkable for discrimination. The judges were in full cry

on the enormity of the crime. One of them on the left, an oldish little man, with thin white hair, and a very red face, the lower part of which unpleasantly projected, was the loudest in his objurgations, mixing his severity, however, with pretended advice and commiseration.

'You have been found guilty,' said this personage, 'of a very great crime—a very great crime indeed. You had no business, neither you nor your cow, on the railway. Not, mind you, that I am, or ever have been, a friend to railways. I always opposed the railway coming this way; but then that was before the railway was the law of the land. Now that the railway is established by act of parliament, it is a very different thing. It is our duty to respect everything established; and though, as I said, I am no friend to railways as railways, yet when the railways are established railways, and have the law on their side, that gives them quite a new character; it gives them a legal standing; and whatever is legal must be supported by law.'

'I say two years' imprisonment, with hard labour,' broke in another member of the bench; 'here is the statute—"Whereas if any person or persons"—and he went on reading aloud from a book, while the red-faced man continued his lecture.

'You see it is a very serious affair. Hundreds might have been killed; the consequences might have been fearful. Don't speak to me. I know what you are going to say. No doubt you have lost your ordinary road for your cows; but the statute does not say anything about that. The railway has stopped up the road legally; and all I can say is, that as law can only be met by law, I would advise you to rise an action against the law that has wrongfully, as you think, taken away your road. Don't imagine, however, for one moment that I advise you to go to law. My advice to you is, that having—I mean, that as you think you have—suffered an injury from the railway, you should take advice as to your being advised—that is, legally advised—as to the proper recourse in the premises, by which I mean the taking away of your road. You understand, I don't advise you to do anything; I only advise you to take advice—yes, advice, good legal advice—from some gentleman, such as, for instance, this gentleman here, pointing to an attorney, as I presumed him to be, sitting below the bench.

This harangue finished, the little red-faced man engaged in a contention about the length of imprisonment for the offence. One of the justices stuck to the statute, and advocated two years; a second thought that two weeks would be sufficient; and the little red-faced man considered that somewhere about a month might answer all the purpose of vindicating the law. Not the least amusing thing about the discussion was its being carried on in an unnecessarily high key—admonitions, accusations, opinions, all being delivered in a loud, angry tone of voice, as if directed to some one over the heads of the audience. The wrangle was maintained long and toughly; so long, that we became uneasy as to the progress of time, and were compelled to leave the court before the question was settled. And this was a court of justice! The whole affair more resembled a scene in Tom and Jerry than the proceedings of a regularly-appointed tribunal.

On retiring from the court-house we went back to the hotel, considering it fully time to have some little experience of Mrs O'Brallagan's cookery. How the dinner was served by a waiter about three-quarters drunk, who had been engaged that morning only on the distinct understanding that he was a teetotaler—how this waiter came into the room every five minutes, thinking, in the conglomeration of his ideas, that the bell had rung; and how, on discovering his mistake, he always went to a large basket standing in a corner of the apartment, and therefrom abstracted a turf, which he placed carefully on the fire; and how at last we had to insist on his discontinuing these acts of attention, as we had no wish to be roasted, or to see the house on fire—how Mr O'Brallagan was very much scandalised with the waiter's eccentricities, and would have dismissed him on the spot, but for the considerate interposition of Mrs O'Brallagan—how Mr Hincinthe O'Brallagan, who was an obliging fellow in the

main, by way of compliment, sat in the room during our meal, and entertained us with a full and particular account of his greyhounds—how Mr O'Brallagan gave it as his well-weighed opinion, that it would be a hard case, very hard indeed, if a man in business like him were not to get one day out of every four for amusement—how Mr O'Brallagan was of belief that every gentleman should keep a good riding-horse—and how it was Mr O'Brallagan's indelibly-fixed impression that the Union had been the ruin of Irish industry—must all be left to the obliging imagination of the reader. A slight stretch further of this accommodating quality will see us leaving Mr O'Brallagan's hospitable mansion, on our return by train to Dublin—discomfited no doubt, but with an undaunted resolution to renew, on Saturday, our Travels in Search of Lord Rosse's Telescope.

SKETCHES IN NATURAL HISTORY.

THE MAGPIE.

THE general appearance of the magpie is so well known, that little need be said about it. The bird appears in two varieties in our country, one a little larger than the other, the former building in trees, the latter in bushes. Naturalists, however, enumerate many species as inhabiting different countries. In North America, the variety known here, or one differing in no material point, is found pretty generally spread, but not in great numbers, so that its existence was only detected in recent times. When Lewis and Clark travelled in 1804 to the Rocky Mountains, they parted with the blue jay about the bend of the Missouri; and then for the first time observed magpies, as if the latter animal had been restricted by the former to certain western ground, like the Indians by the Europeans.*

The active lively aspect of the magpie, with its long tail constantly moving up and down, is familiar to all persons who have any acquaintance with the country. So is its party-coloured plumage, the basis of a descriptive term—*pie*—long in common use. Few, however, are sufficiently well acquainted with the magpie, to know that there is not only a striking contrast between the breast and scapular feathers, and those of the rest of the body, but the wings and tail are beautifully glossed with blue, green, and purple, so that the bird, seen close at hand, and in a natural state, is a very fine one.† Sometimes, though rarely, variations occur. Two magpies, entirely of a cream colour, were hatched a few years ago at a farmhouse in Eskdale, Dumfriesshire.‡

The next most prominent peculiarity of the magpie is its chattering voice—'the chattering pie' is proverbial. Mr Waterton says, it 'was notorious two thousand years ago for pertness of character and volubility of tongue. Ovid, who knew more of birds than any man of his time, gives an account of a family of young ladies in Macedonia who were all changed into magpies; and he expressly tells us that they retained their inordinate fondness for gabble long after they had lost the lovely form of woman:

"Nunc quoque in alitibus, facundia prisca remansit,
Ranca garrulitas, studiumque immane loquendi."

"And still their tongues went on, though changed to birds,
In endless clack and vast desire of words."§

Somewhat more than a hundred years ago, an ingenious Frenchman, named Peter Bougeant, endeavoured to show in a book that beasts have a spiritual soul, which was answered by the French government in a warrant to clap up the author in La Fleche. Let us hear, however, what honest Peter had to say on the magpie, which, as he justly observes, is so great a chatterer. 'It is easy to perceive,' says he, 'that her discourses or songs are varied. She lowers or raises her voice, hastens or protracts the measure, lengthens or shortens her chit-

* Wilson's American Ornithology, 3 vols. 1823.

† Montagu's Ornithological Dictionary, by Rennie, art. Magpie.

‡ Jardine's edition of White's Selborne.

§ Magazine of Natural History, May 1826.

chat; and these evidently are so many separate sentences. Now, following the rule I have laid down, that the knowledge, desires, wants, and of course the expressions of beasts, are confined to what is useful or necessary for their preservation, methinks nothing is more easy than at first, and in general, to understand the meaning of these different phrases. . . . Do but observe what circumstance she is in with regard to her wants, then reflect what you would say yourself in a like situation, and this will be exactly the very thing she says. For instance, if she speaks, eating with a good appetite, she infallibly says at that time what you would say on the like occasion—"This is very good; this does me good." If you offer her something bad, she immediately says, as you would yourself—"This does not please me; this is not good for me." In a word, suppose yourself to be in the several circumstances of one who cannot express anything but his wants, and you will find in your own discourse the interpretation of what a magpie says in those circumstances: "There is nothing more to be had here. Let us go to some other place. I am going; follow me. Don't you hear me? Who is coming there? Have a care, have a care! Let us fly away." You perceive that I could swell this dictionary with many like phrases, especially if I should take in all the expressions suggested by love, jealousy, grief, and joy.*

The magpie is by nature a very familiar bird; in Norway, where it is kindly treated, it lives in streets and farmyards, and even ventures within houses, exactly as pigeons do amongst us. In our country, its familiarity is seen in its habit of building in trees close to farmhouses, and in hedges and bushes near roads; but the hostility it meets with from husbandmen makes it shy and wary in its demeanour. The fact is undoubted, that it is a voracious bird, devouring great quantities of fruit and grain in certain seasons, though in general it lives upon insects and other little animals, not disdainful carrion when nothing better is to be had. It is said to attack small quadrupeds occasionally, as hares and lambs; poultry also become its prey, and it is a noted destroyer of eggs. Professor Macgillivray describes the ordinary habits in lively terms:—"There," he says, "on the old ash that overshadows the farmyard, you may see a pair, one perched on the topmost twig, the other hopping among the branches, uttering an incessant clatter of short hard notes, scarcely resembling anything else in nature, but withal not unpleasant, at least to the lover of birds. How gracefully she of the top twig swings in the breeze! Off she starts, and, directing her flight towards the firwood opposite, proceeds with a steady, moderately rapid, but rather heavy flight, performed by quick beats of her apparently short wings, intermitted for a moment at intervals. Birds with long graduated tails generally fly heavily, or at least have the appearance of doing so: the pheasant, for example, and the magpie. Even the cuckoo, in its ordinary flight, seems to lack speed, although, on occasion, it shoots along with the rapidity of a sparrow-hawk. Chattering by the way, she seems to call her mate after her; but he, intent on something which he has spied below, hops downwards from twig to branch, and descends to the ground. Raising his body as high as possible, and carrying his tail inclined upwards, to avoid contact with the moist grass, he walks a few paces, and spying an earthworm half protruded from its hole, drags it out by a sudden jerk, breaks it in pieces, and swallows it. Now, under the hedge he has found a snail, which he will presently detach from its shell. But something among the bushes has startled him, and lightly he springs upwards, chattering the while, to regain his favourite tree. It is a cat, which, not less frightened than himself, runs off toward the house. The magpie again descends, steps slowly over the green, looking from side to side, stops and listens, advances rapidly by a succession of leaps, and encounters a whole brood of chickens, with their mother at

their heels. Were they unprotected, how deliciously would the magpie feast; but alas! it is vain to think of it, for with fury in her eye, bristled plumage, and loud clamour, headlong rushes the hen, overturning two of her younglings, when the enemy suddenly wheels round, avoiding the encounter, and flies off after his mate. There again, you perceive them in the meadow, as they walk about with elevated tails, looking for something eatable, although apparently with little success. By the hedge afar off are two boys with a gun, endeavouring to creep up to a flock of plovers on the other side. But the magpies have observed them; and presently rising, fly directly over the field, chattering vehemently, on which the whole flock takes to wing, and the disappointed sportsmen sheer off in another direction.*

The bird, he adds, 'generally walks in the same manner as the crows, but occasionally leaps in a sidelong direction. . . . On the appearance of a fox or cat, or other unfriendly animal, it never ceases hovering about it, and alarming the neighbourhood by its cries, until the enemy has slunk away out of sight.'

The nest of the magpie is curious in form—a cup-like basis of sticks mixed with clay, and lined with fibrous roots; over this a dome of twigs securely interlaced; a space being left at the side for the entrance. Though denied by some naturalists, there is reason to believe that the bird leaves a portion of the fabric so weak, that, on an exigency, it could slip out as through a back-door, and so escape.† Albertus Magnus says, 'she not only constructs two passages for her nest, one for entering, and another for going out, but frequently makes two nests on contiguous trees, with the design of misleading plunderers, who may as readily choose the empty nest as the one containing the eggs; on the principle that Dionysius the tyrant had thirty sleeping-rooms.' A curious contrivance of the animal for protection in peculiar circumstances is related by the Rev. Mr Stanley, as having been observed by a gentleman in a remote and barren part of Scotland. 'Observing the magpies hopping round a gooseberry-bush, and flying in and out of it in an extraordinary manner, he noticed the circumstance to the owners of the house in which he was, who informed him that, as there were no trees in the neighbourhood, they had for several years built their nest and brought up their young in that bush. And that foxes, cats, hawks, &c. might not interrupt them, they had barricaded not only the nest, but the bush itself, all round with briars and thorns, in a formidable manner. The materials in the inside of the nest were soft, warm, and comfortable to the touch, but all round, on the outside, so rough, strong, and firmly entwined with the bush, that, without a hedge-knife, or something of the kind, even a man could not, without much pain and trouble, get at their young; the barrier from the outer to the inner edge being above a foot in breadth. Frogs, mice, worms, or anything living, were plentifully brought to their young. One day, one of the parent birds attacked a rat, but not being able to kill it, one of the young ones came out of the nest and assisted in its destruction, which was not finally accomplished till the other old one, arriving with a dead mouse, also lent its aid. The female was observed to be the most active and thievish, and withal very ungrateful; for although the children about the house had often frightened cats and hawks from the spot, yet she one day seized a chicken, and carried it to the top of the house to eat it, where the hen immediately followed, and having rescued the chicken, brought it safely down in her beak; and it was remarked that the poor little bird, though it made a great noise while the magpie was carrying it up, was quite quiet, and seemed to feel no pain, while its mother was carrying it down. These magpies were supposed to have been the very same pair which had built there for several years, never suffering either the young, when grown up, or anything else, to

* Gentleman's Magazine, 1739, p. 126.

† Macgillivray's British Birds, l. 563.
Jesse's Country Life, p. 210.

take possession of their bush. The nest they carefully fortified afresh every spring with rough, strong, prickly sticks, which they sometimes drew in with their united forces, if unable to effect the object alone.*

Over and above all consideration of its predatory habits, country people have a superstitious prejudice against the magpie. They say it knows their future destiny, and bodes ill-luck. To see one, or four, or nine, is held particularly ominous. 'They tell you,' says Mr Waterton, 'that when four of these birds are seen together, it is a sure sign that, ere long, there will be a funeral in the village; and that nine are quite a horrible sight. I have often heard countrymen say that they would rather see any bird than a magpie.'† There is a custom in Scotland, which we have never seen alluded to, of nodding to the magpie on first seeing it, and saying, 'How do you do? how do you do?' by way of averting the dreaded evil fortune. The people of our country say—

One's sorrow, two's mirth,
Three's a wedding, four's death—

which partly agrees with the above statement of the case. Sir Humphry Davy has endeavoured to explain that the male magpie, in stormy weather, may go abroad alone for food, leaving his mate in the nest, while in good weather both will venture forth.‡ But the suggestion does not, to our mind, get to the bottom of the mystery. How should four or nine be thought so unlucky?

There is good reason to believe that the magpie was unknown in Ireland in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and that it made its first appearance in that country in the latter part of the century before the last, entering by the county of Wexford, where English settlers formed the prevalent population. Tradition says that magpies were driven over to Ireland during a storm.§

The magpie is capable of being tamed, and made the friend and familiar of the family with which it lives. In that case its beauty suffers, as does that of all naturally wild animals which are brought up about a house; but its chatter, its tricks, and ingenuity are a source of much amusement. It can very readily be taught to imitate the human voice. Of one which attained this accomplishment, an anecdote is given in Mr Hone's *Table-Book*. 'A cobbler, who lived on indifferent terms with his wife in Kingsmead Street, Bath, kept a magpie, that learned his favourite ejaculatory exclamation—"What the plague art (*h*)at?" Whoever came to his shop, where the bulk of his business was carried on, the magpie was sure to use this exclamation; but the bird was matched by the ghostly, bodily, and tall person of "Hats to dress!" a well-known street perambulator and hat improver, who, with that cry, daily passed the temple of Crispin. The magpie aspiring at with *h*, the cry of "Hats to dress" considered it a personal insult, and after long endurance, one morning put the bird into his bag, and walked away with his living plague. When he reached home, poor mag was daintily fed, and became a favourite with the dresser's wife. It chanced, however, that the cobbler, who supplied the *sole* understanding of "Hats to dress," waited on him to be rebeavered for his own understanding. The magpie, hearing his old master's voice, cried out, "What the plague art (*h*)at?" "Ha, ha, ha!" said the astonished and delighted cobbler; "come to fetch thee home, thou scapegrace." The hatter and the cobbler drank their explanation over a quart of ale; and with a new, old, hat on his head, the latter trudged through Stall Street, with his magpie in his apron, crying, "What the plague art (*h*)at?"

There is, however, one drawback from the pleasantness of the domesticated magpie—that he is a determined thief. Like the birds of the crow family, to which he

is very nearly allied, he is particularly fond of shining articles. Thus he is extremely apt to flich jewellery, and other light articles of value, from the houses which he is permitted to approach. It is hardly necessary to remind the reader of the operatic drama of *La Gazza Ladra*, founded on the popular story of a serving-girl who narrowly escaped the death of a felon, on the suspicion of having stolen some of her mistress's silver spoons and forks, while the real culprit was a magpie, which secreted the articles in a neighbouring church tower. Mr Jesse tells us that the magpie 'is not only fond of hiding things, but selects particular localities for that purpose. Two magpies, kept in a very extensive kitchen-garden, always hid food they could not eat, and also concealed bones, bits of bread, and even grains of wheat, which they searched for and found amongst the stable manure. One day some men were sent to dig up that part of the garden which had been the favourite hiding-place of the birds. The work had scarcely commenced, when the magpies showed that they were perfectly aware of what was going forward; and also afforded a proof of the retentiveness of their memory, which was not a little extraordinary. They hastened to the spot, and with their beaks cleared the earth, which concealed their hidden treasures, which they conveyed to some distance, returning for the rest. In this way seven or eight bones and pieces of bread were disinterred, although some of them had been buried three or four weeks; thus showing that they perfectly recollected peculiar spots.'

TALES OF THE PASSIONS.

ANGER.

THE wind blew chilly outside the house, and the fire burnt brightly inside, when a happy-looking group drew round to enjoy the cheerful blaze. The younger portion of the family at least looked very happy, but Dr Davis, the father of the group, appeared more than usually grave and abstracted. 'Why do you look so depressed to-night, dear papa? The wind that is howling outside is nothing to us when we have a comfortable house and a good fire to be grateful for,' said his eldest daughter, a nice-looking girl of about eighteen.

'The truth is, Mary, I can scarcely turn my thoughts from that poor young man, whose remains I this day accompanied to the grave.'

'Oh, papa, I wish you would tell me his history—I always felt very much interested for him.'

'With pleasure, my love. It is one from which we may all take a lesson, though perhaps some of my young auditors would rather hear something merrier. I remember that poor young fellow a fine handsome child. He was the eldest son of a gentleman of fortune, and his birth gave rise to great rejoicing amongst all the friends of his father, Mr Martin. He was about two years old when I made his acquaintance; it was when I first settled here, before I had the honour of knowing any of you. His father and mother were very old friends of mine; and when I went to see them, Mrs Martin produced her son and heir, and introduced him to me with great pride. The young gentleman and I soon became very good friends, and when I called at the house, he invariably made his way into the drawing-room. It was with the most sincere regret I noticed in the child extreme violence of temper. The eldest son, and a great pet, this, his only fault, was left totally uncorrected. I often remonstrated with his mother on spoiling him, and begged of her not to allow him to indulge his passion so completely without control; but she used to say, "Oh, he is such a delightful child, I cannot bear to scold him! He will be good when he gets sense." But Willie, I think, had quite sense enough to perceive that to get into a passion was the sure way to gain his points, and consequently had no notion of giving up a custom that he found so successful. When the maid came for him, he used to beat, or try to kick her. If his mother desired him to go, a stick, which was his constant auxiliary, was

* Familiar History of Birds, i. 252.

† Magazine of Natural History, ix. 225.

‡ Salmonia.

§ Yarrell's British Birds, ii. 116.

again brought into requisition. I have seen him, at that early age, get into such a rage, that he would throw himself down, and kick his heels on the floor, or toss his playthings about the room until they were broken to pieces. On these occasions Mrs Martin would generally say, "Well, Willie shall do whatever he likes; he shant go if he does not wish it;" and then pet him till she got him into good-humour again. She used to say in his hearing, "He is a good child, but he is very passionate;" as if it were a curious fact that he was passionate, and always must continue so; or, "I am afraid to forbid him such a thing, he will get so angry;" and Willie was quick enough to take advantage of this. His ill temper, though at first it amused his mother, in the end completely overawed her, and she would yield to his wishes rather than witness a fit of passion.

"Willie was the only child for six years, when another son was born. All rejoiced at the event, as they said it would save the eldest from ruin. Unfortunately, however, it had not that effect. Mrs Martin had just learned sufficient experience to turn over a new leaf, not with Willie, but with the new-comer. "Well, I believe you were right, Dr Davis," said she to me, "when you told me I was spoiling darling Willie. I am determined to keep little Arthur in order, as soon as he is old enough to understand anything." I ventured to suggest that it was not too late to reclaim Master William; but she seemed to consider such an undertaking impossible. "I am so fond of him," she used to say, "I cannot bear to correct him." But I believe the truth was, she was so fond of herself, she could not endure to risk the smallest diminution of the child's affection for her. She suffered afterwards even for this weakness, for William always preserved a sort of overbearing manner to his mother. On the contrary, Arthur was always respectful and affectionate to her, as a son should be. Mr Martin never interfered in the concerns of the nursery, except to make Willie do as he was bid, if he attempted to rebel in his presence; and the child, knowing that he must behave himself properly before his father, generally kept out of his way. Willie soon perceived that, however it might be with him, his brother was intended to be a good boy. He was not jealous of him, for he had no cause to be so; neither did he dislike him: I think he was even fond of him; but he found him a most convenient object on whom to vent his ill temper, when nursery-maids no longer came in his way.

"The more I saw of my friend Willie, the more I regretted the treatment he had received. With the one exception of having his temper under no sort of control, he was the nicest boy I ever knew. Generous, open-hearted, and amiably disposed, he was beloved by all about him; and his manners were entirely those of a gentleman. But he was never to be depended upon, for, his anger once excited, he completely forgot himself. I had some hopes that Willie would learn at school the necessity of self-control. His temper must, I am sure, have got him into many scrapes; but, alas! nothing cured him. He had been too long allowed to indulge his passion, and had even found so much benefit in it, that he had not the resolution to begin an improvement then. In fact, he had never been taught how extremely sinful and wicked it was to get into a passion—he had never learned the necessity of praying for grace to overcome himself.

"When William returned home for the vacations, I perceived with regret that there was no improvement in him. Arthur was naturally a very good-tempered boy; and besides, had the advantage of being better taught than his elder brother.

"I have often seen William strike him in anger, and he never attempted to make any return. He was always ready to forgive William when he repented, which he generally did when his anger had cooled. Yet, notwithstanding, I think, though he never got angry himself, Arthur had a way of irritating his brother.

"It is very curious, but I do believe the most good-tempered people are often those who are the most apt to exasperate others. Because a trifle would not annoy them, they think it should not vex others; and thus, without

intending it, they try the tempers of those who are more irritable than themselves. I remember sometimes saying to Arthur, "You should not do such a thing to your brother; it vexes him." "But it ought not to vex him," he would say. "You think, my little man, that it ought not to fret him, because it would not annoy you; and you are right in thinking that he should not let himself be annoyed at it; but you see it does vex him, so you should not do it, or you will have to answer for being accessory to his sin."

"Well, years passed quickly by, and my friend William came of age. We had a grand ball to celebrate his majority, and a great dinner to the tenants. Mrs Martin looked the picture of happiness. The young heir appeared to the greatest advantage. Everyone was in good humour, every one was trying to please him: there was nothing in the least to disturb him. I remember seeing him open the ball with Miss Eastwood—a very interesting-looking girl, the daughter of a gentleman who resided in the neighbourhood.

"A few months after, Mrs Martin told me, with great delight, that her son was going to be married to Miss Eastwood. She said "she was everything she could wish him to find in a wife: very well educated, amiable, and good-tempered; and that is a very important point after all," she added with a sigh. I had hoped that William was beginning to correct the violence of his temper, but the sad tone of her last words made me fear I was wrong.

"The day was fixed for the wedding, and I was invited to it. I went to call on William, to congratulate him, but, as I entered the parlour, Mrs Martin met me with tears in her eyes. I anxiously inquired if there was anything wrong. "My son's marriage is broken off," said she with considerable agitation; "and I fear his unfortunate temper is the cause." She then proceeded to tell me that, a few days before, William went out hunting with his intended father-in-law. During the day his horse became restive, which in itself irritated him; and a countryman attempting clumsily to assist him, and making the matter worse, William became very angry, and struck the poor man. "You know," she said, "what a dreadful expression William's countenance gets when he is in a passion. Happily, the man was not injured. It was the first time Mr Eastwood had seen William angry; and he witnessed the scene with great regret, and even terror. He began to fear that a man who could thus let his passions overcome him, was not to be depended on; and that his daughter's happiness would be very insecure in such hands. He felt it his duty to make inquiries as to the general character of William's temper; and, alas! he had to learn that such fits of passion were but too frequent. Indeed," she said, "some people are so ill-natured, that I fear he has even heard exaggerated accounts of poor William's defects. Be that as it may, he wrote to my son, saying that he felt it his duty to withdraw his consent from his daughter's marriage; that he did so with the sincerest regret, as he knew it would make both William and Lucy very unhappy; but he felt that the pain it would cause them would be the lesser of two evils, as he feared that he would be unwarrantably risking the happiness of his daughter's whole life were he to intrust it to the keeping of a man whose temper was so uncontrolled. He concluded by impressing upon William very kindly, but very urgently, the necessity of, though late, commencing a reformation, begging of him to remember the awful account he would one day have to render of every angry word and deed of passion; and finally, holding out to him a hope of winning Lucy's hand, some future time, when he had earned it by overcoming his temper."

"Mrs Martin said that when William read this letter he was perfectly infuriated; he walked rapidly up and down the room, tore the letter in pieces, and threw it into the fire. Mrs Martin tried to soothe him, but she felt more than ever her want of influence with him. He left the room; she tried to follow him, fearing to leave him alone in the state of mind he was in; but he slammed the door, and locked it after him. When she was able to get out of the room, she learned that he had left the house,

carrying a small portmanteau. His father and she spent the night in a state of the greatest misery on his account; but the following morning she received a note from him, requesting her to send his servant after him with his luggage, as he was going on the continent. "He has gone away," she said, "without answering Mr Eastwood's letter, or making any explanation to Lucy. The poor girl is inconsolable; and I, oh, I am very wretched! It is all, all my fault." I really felt for her very much, she wept so bitterly.

Two years passed by. Mrs Martin heard occasionally from her son; at first his letters came very seldom, and the angry tone of them distressed her, but by degrees they improved; at length one came that gave her great pleasure. In it he said he regretted to hear that Lucy had taken his absence so much to heart; at the same time he could not help feeling pleased at her constancy, as he loved her as much as ever. At first, he said, he felt angry with her father for breaking off the marriage, which he thought very unkind; but he now began to perceive that the error lay with himself, and he had resolved, for *her sake*, to commence a thorough amendment of his temper. Alas that he had no better motive! The resolution based only on such a foundation was built upon sand. His letters continued to express the same sentiments. He used to say, "I am getting so meek and quiet, the post-boys may even keep me waiting with impunity. When I feel myself in sufficiently good practice, I shall come home and claim dearest Lucy's hand; I wonder if she will give it to me. No girl ever had such a good-humoured husband as she will have." Mrs Martin smiled in showing it to me. "I hope he will keep his resolution," said she; "Mr Eastwood remarked that he would trust him more if he trusted himself less."

Shortly after this Mr Martin died. On this occasion Arthur was to his mother all that the best of sons could be. Still the widow, in her affliction, naturally wished for William's return. He came without delay, and I will do him the justice to say that on this occasion he tried every art of kindness and affection to console his mother, and make her loss seem less grievous.

William now renewed his courtship, and the year of mourning for Mr Martin gave ample time to Lucy's father to judge of William's improvement. He contrived several ways of trying his temper, but William was always on his guard, and kept himself under control. Poor Lucy had been so miserable during his absence, that her father was very glad to find no objection to the marriage any longer. Again the day was fixed; and William, now sure of his prize, became less cautious.

One day he and his brother were standing on the steps of the hall-door, both in great good-humour, when William's favourite hunter rushed past them; it had escaped from the stable, and the groom was following in great agitation.

The animal, in trying to escape pursuit, jumped over an invisible paling. Unfortunately its leg caught, and it fell. This was too great a trial of William's temper; his passion rose; he grew first pale, then red; he stamped his foot on the ground, and gave vent to his passion without control. "If Lucy saw you now!" exclaimed Arthur. The taunt was too much at the moment. William turned round and struck him on the ear. The blow in itself was not one seriously to injure him, but it was so sudden, that it made him stagger. Unfortunately he was standing on the very edge of the step, and, horror of horrors! he fell down the flight on his head. His brother tried to catch him, but his fall was the work of a moment. I happened to come up at the time. I never witnessed such a scene, and may I never behold such another! Arthur lay lifeless with his head on the step, and William sat beside him, his eyes glaring, his teeth chattering, and a fixed vacancy in his countenance. "What has happened!" I exclaimed. He made no reply, but pointed to his brother. I took him by the hand, and led him into the house. He made no resistance, but followed me like a child, without speaking one word. The whole household gathered about us as we entered. Leaving poor William to the care of the servants, I hastened to attend

to Arthur; but, alas! my efforts for him were unavailing. The fall had been fatal. Happily the poor mother was out, or I do think she would have lost her senses. Her carriage was now seen driving up the avenue, so we carried poor Arthur's lifeless form into the house, that it might not meet her eye. But then the question occurred—who should tell her what had happened in her absence? She had left her sons in health and high spirits, preparing for the approaching wedding. She returned to find one dead—his life sacrificed to the uncontrolled passion of the other.

The following morning William was in the height of a brain-fever. It was fearful to hear his ravings; ever on one subject—his brother. In all my experience of illness, I never witnessed one so distressing. For some time his life was in imminent danger: his mother watched by his bedside night and day: her misery was truly heartrending to witness. Her remorse for the way in which she had brought up her eldest son, her grief for the loss of Arthur, the manner of his death, and her fear of losing William also—all together seemed an overwhelming weight of misfortune. I think she would have sunk under it but for the excitement of her son's illness, which obliged her to exert herself. In the course of time, and after days of frightful suspense to his mother, William recovered his health, but not his senses. He remained a wretched maniac. At first he used occasionally to be very violent, but finally the insanity calmed down into a melancholy madness—more hopeless, though not so distressing. He never recovered his senses until within a few hours of his death, when he spoke to me quite collectedly, though he seemed to have no recollection of anything that had happened.

The doctor stopped. He had brought tears to the eyes of his young auditors, and his own were not dry.

"Now tell me, my boy," said he, after a pause, to his youngest child, "what is the moral of my story?"

"It is, papa, that we should all learn to control our passions."

"Yes, my child; but it can only be done by a pious reliance on God's assistance."

"Tell me, papa, what became of poor Lucy?"

"She is still alive, but I fear gradually wasting away with decline. I do not think she will long survive William, poor fellow."

"And his mother—what of her?"

"She died, I am happy to say. She suffered dreadfully from reproaches of conscience for the errors she had committed in the education of her son; but she sought consolation where alone it was to be found—in religion—and died quite calmly. It was truly a tragical dispersion of a household. I hope it may be a lesson to us all!"

MENTAL EFFECTS OF LONG VOYAGES.

In a small medical work,* designed for the guidance of landmen during sea voyages, we find some remarkable observations on the *mental effects* produced by living on board ship. That people should experience sickness, and other unpleasant bodily ills at sea, is to be reasonably expected; but few will be prepared to learn that a lengthened voyage is apt also to disturb the mind, and alter the usual habits of thought. Between the physical and mental system there is, medically speaking, a well-known sympathy—the mind usually suffering along with any serious bodily derangement. At sea, says the author of the work referred to, this sympathetic disorder is peculiarly apparent. "In the year 1840, a young subaltern proceeded in a freight ship to the East. He was of a plethoric habit, and from the day of his embarkation made up his mind to eat and drink as much as possible, and to take the least possible exercise. The vessel was ninety days in making the passage, and during this period the young officer continued to quarrel with almost every one of his fellow-voyagers; the most

* Hints to Landmen on Sea Voyages and Sea-Sickness. By Arthur Rumer, M. R. C. S. Orr and Co., London.

trivial circumstances giving rise, in many instances, to the most "mighty contests." In fact this young person had lost all control over his temper—a natural consequence of the excited condition of his biliary organs. There is in my recollection a circumstance which fully bears out the hypothesis—that the reckless mode of living indulged in on board ship exercises an extraordinary influence over the mental faculties. A gallant major of the — regiment once asserted at the cuddy table that one of the queen's frigates, during a strong breeze, went clean over a strange brig, merely carrying away the truck of her mast! Notwithstanding the utter improbability of this story, the major defended his veracity with such pertinacious obstinacy, that upon a person at table saying he doubted the possibility of such an occurrence, he considered himself greatly insulted, and it was not until fourteen days had elapsed that the affair was amicably settled. On another occasion a quarrel arose from the circumstance of a gentleman's forgetting to ask a person who sat next him if he felt disposed to take a tart, and in this case three weeks had elapsed ere the disputants became completely reconciled. I can at once adduce a few more instances of this peculiar state of mental derangement: I have heard, on more than one occasion, the captain of a colonial regiment declare as his opinion—and he would have supported it with his honour—that the tea was made of bilge water; and when the assertion was contradicted in positive terms, he felt extremely indignant. I remember a young subaltern attacking an assistant-surgeon in the most vehement manner, simply because his family had caught the measles from a little girl who was afflicted with the disease in the cabin adjoining his own. This morbid irritability of temper leads those who labour under its influence not only to torture themselves about their own imaginary troubles, but to busy themselves with the affairs and interests of others. In the year 1842 there were twenty-seven passengers on board the ship (bound to the East), six of whom were single ladies, all amiable and accomplished, as single young ladies ought to be. One of these fair damsels, being of a lively disposition, laughed to an immoderate extent, and her laughter excited the extreme displeasure of a Dutch clergyman, who had, during the voyage, devoted a large portion of his time to the care of his body. This honoured personage, in the exercise of his discretion, wrote a long letter to a married lady on board, complaining of the girl's conduct, and begging that a sense of his indignation might be communicated to the unbecoming offender, who was at length sentenced to three days' sedentary employment at the remotest end of the cabin table. The affair, however, did not end here—a military doctor on board also took upon himself the responsibility of giving the young lady in question a long and severe lecture upon the impropriety of indulging in her natural disposition to laughter. Finding herself thus attacked, the lady consulted the young friends of her own age and sex; and the result was, that the dire conspiracy was made known to the young gentlemen passengers, who remonstrated with the worthy doctor upon the injustice of his proceedings—the young gallants little dreaming, at the moment, that their interference in the matter was quite as unjustifiable as the course adopted by the doctor. The result was, that several quarrels took place; and in many instances it was found extremely difficult to avoid a serious termination. However, as the disputants approached their destination, the joy which the mind experienced effectually overcame the ailments of the body, and at length a general amnesty was declared.

A curious instance of this canker of the feelings during long sea voyages occurs in the awkward ill-will which passengers manifest towards each other when arriving at any of the half-way stations to India. The author mentions 'having heard it remarked by several hotel and lodging-house keepers at the Cape, St Helena, and the Mauritius, that the passengers are always in a state of warfare, the ill-feeling existing amongst them being at times perfectly ludicrous. Many of them will not live at the same house with their fellow-passengers. The consequence is, that they are often put to serious inconvenience, and are obliged to content themselves with

abiding-places, which, under ordinary circumstances, they would consider unfit for their reception.'

Bilious congestion, arising from over-eating and want of exercise, is mentioned as the proximate cause of these mental disturbances; but we should also ascribe them to the listless idleness and vacuity of thought which usually prevail on board ship. The recommendation of Mr Romer to passengers is to eat and drink in moderation, take regular daily exercise, and keep the internal functions in order. May we be permitted to add—let every ship have a good library on board, from which the means of mental solacement is to be obtained!

AN AMERICAN'S VISIT TO ENGLAND.

SECOND ARTICLE.

IN our previous article, it was mentioned that Mr Henry Colman is an American agriculturist, who had visited the United Kingdom with the view of procuring information on subjects connected with his profession. We have referred to his ideas on the general aspect of England—the beauty of the country, and yet, amidst all its rural loveliness, the too frequent inferiority of its husbandry. Turning from the appearance and management of the soil, he speaks of the persons who reside upon and cultivate it.

To an American, it appears strange that men of capital should be found renting land; and it is still more surprising that such tenants should, in some instances, expend thousands of pounds on manures and grass seeds; yet experience, he says, 'has demonstrated that in these cases the most liberal outlay of capital is the most sure to be followed by successful results.' Such outlays of course only take place when leases for a term of years are granted; and it is generally the want of these that discourages substantial improvement. Our tourist acknowledges that the payment of rents acts as a stimulant to industry—an admission of some value; the proof of the fact, however, on a comparison of the condition of the American and British farmer, being too evident to be disallowed. Mr Colman is pleased with the practice in Scotland of granting leases of nineteen years. 'One would be led to infer that the terms on which landlords live with their tenants, in Scotland, must be honourable and just to both parties, since renewals are common: the same estates have been, in many instances, in the same families for a century, and the expenses incurred in some cases by tenants, in the erection of permanent buildings and other fixtures, are very heavy; showing the confidence of the tenant in his landlord. One farm was pointed out to me where the tenant had recently died, leaving only one child, an infant son. In this case, that the lease might be retained in the family, three of the neighbouring farmers had agreed to take the whole management of the estate until the young man came of age. In such cases, there is very little difference between a lease and a freehold in fee-simple.' The Scotch lease, in point of fact, is a species of inheritance—a thing belonging to the family for such a term of years as makes it worth while to obtain and preserve it. The obligation to pay a pretty smart rent stimulates the farmer to try all proper means to make the land productive; but as the obligation has usually some reference to the price of grain for the time being, he is to a certain extent protected from absolute ruin, while the landlord may be said to participate in his risk. Landlords are sometimes harsh, though, in the main, getting a poor return for their money; nevertheless, observes Mr Colman, 'I believe there is a great deal more abuse of power on the part of farmers towards their labourers, than on the part of landlords towards their tenants. The farmers can protect themselves; the labourers, in general, are without power. Indeed, the more cultivated and improved the education of a man, and the higher the condition which he occupies in society, the stronger are the inducements to a just and honourable conduct, not only in his enlarged mind, but

in the increased value of character to such a man.' Without imputing wilful cruelty on the part of farmers generally towards their dependents, we fear that, in too many instances, they may be convicted of something worse than neglect. It is undeniable that farm-labourers are, as a class, poorly paid, and little sympathised with. 'I will not say they are in a degraded condition,' observes Mr Colman, 'for that would not, in any sense, apply to them, unless where, by their own bad habits, they may have degraded themselves; but they are in a very low condition, and extremely ignorant and servile. They rarely, as with us, live in the house of their employers, but either in cottages on the farm, or in a neighbouring village. They are usually comfortably clad, in this respect contrasting most favourably with the mechanics and manufacturers in the cities and large towns; but they are, in general, very poorly fed. Their wages, compared with the wages of labour in the United States, are very low. The cash wages paid to them seldom equals the cash wages paid to labourers with us, and our labourers, in addition to their wages in money, have their board; but the English labourers are obliged to subsist themselves, with an occasional allowance, in some instances, of beer, in haying or harvesting. The division of labour among them is quite particular—a ploughman being always a ploughman, and almost inseparable from his horses; a ditcher, a ditcher; a shepherd, a shepherd only: the consequence of this is, that what they do they do extremely well. But they appear totally destitute of invention, and have evidently little skill or ingenuity when called upon to apply themselves to a work different from that to which they have been accustomed. Their gait is very slow; and they seem to me to grow old quite early. The former circumstance explained itself to me when I examined and lifted the shoes which they are accustomed to wear, and which, when, in addition to being well charged with iron, they gather the usual amount of clay which adheres to them in heavy soils, furnish at least some reason why, like an Alexandrine verse, "they drag their slow length along." There are occasional instances of extraordinarily good management where they are enabled to accumulate small sums; but in no case, under the best exertions, can they make from the wages of labour anything like a provision for their old age and decay.'

The condition of the rural population in Scotland seemed to the traveller to present some pleasing but also some bad features. The practice of exclusively employing only unmarried men, and lodging them in bothies, or huts, by themselves, meets with just reprehension. 'It is not difficult to infer that, where young men and others are turned into a hovel together, and without any one to look after their lodging or prepare their meals, the style of living cannot have the advantages even of the wigwam of a North American savage; for there, at least, there is a squaw to provide food and look after the premises.' A practice equally vicious, if not identical with that of the bothie system, is the putting unmarried ploughmen to sleep in stable-lofts; and to this Mr Colman does not allude. Will it be credited by Englishmen that Scottish farmers—men of capital and general intelligence, as well as professing Christians—should actually make a practice of sending their servants to sleep among cattle? Yet such is the case; and though it would be difficult to devise a more effectual means of demoralisation, such means are not wanting. Once a-year, during harvest, there may be said to prevail a wide-spread and long-accredited system of breaking down all sense of virtue or decency among the labourers. We here allude to the method of lodging the large bands of reapers, native and Irish, men and women, of whom sometimes as many as two hundred live for a time together. 'I was curious to know,' says Mr Colman, 'how so many people were lodged at night. In some cases they throw themselves down under the stacks, or upon some straw in the sheds, or outbuildings of the farm; but in the case to which I

refer above, I was shown into the cattle-stalls and stables, the floors of which were littered with straw; and here the men's coats and the women's caps and bonnets upon the walls, indicated that it was occupied by both parties promiscuously. This was indeed the fact. Each person, as far as possible, was supplied with a blanket, and these were the whole accommodations and the whole support. This was not a singular instance. I am unwilling to make any comments upon such facts as these. They speak for themselves. They are matters of general custom, and seemed to excite no attention. I do not refer to them as matter of reproach to the employers, who were persons of respectable character and condition, and whose families were distinguished for their refinement; but it presents one among many instances in which habit and custom reconcile us to many things which would otherwise offend us, and lead us to view some practices, utterly unjustifiable in themselves, with a degree of complacency or indifference; and as unalterable, because they have been so long established. I believe there is only one part of the United States where anything resembling such a condition of things prevails, or would be permitted; and there only among a class of beings whose claims to humanity seem not very well established in all minds, and whose degradation, on account of their complexion, appears absolutely hopeless. But even here, this indiscriminate consorting is not common; nor would it be permitted by any respectable planter.' We hope these remarks will not be without their due effect on the minds of our agriculturists, who, erring from no deliberate purpose, will be the more inclined to remedy the evils alluded to.

This intelligent and kind-hearted American feels acutely for the ignorance of letters, and consequently mental apathy, manifested by the bulk of the English rural people; and, from experience, combats the false idea that education would be injurious to the labourers. 'Who does not know the difference between a stupid and an intelligent labourer; between a man scarcely raised above the brute which he drives, and a man whose faculties are all awake, and who is constantly upon the alert to discover and adopt the best mode of executing the task which he has undertaken; between a beast altogether the creature of instinct, or a mere machine, moving only as it is impelled, and unable to correct its own errors, and a thinking, knowing, reasoning animal, always searching for the right way, making all his actions subservient to his judgment, and gathering continual accessions of power and facility of action from his own and the experience of others? Every one will admit that the more intelligence, the more skill, the more knowledge a man has, the better is he qualified, other things being equal, for the management of a farm. It holds equally true that the more intelligence, the more skill, the more knowledge a labourer has, the better is he qualified to assist in that management, and to perform the part which belongs to him in the working of the whole machinery.' The American labourer having been educated and taught to depend on himself, to inquire, to reflect, to observe, to experiment, occupies a comparatively high station in the scale, and will push, unassisted, through numberless difficulties. Let the English labourer be exposed to the same educational influences, and no longer will he be quoted as a degraded and helpless being.

Mr Colman makes mention as follows of an interesting attempt on an estate in Germany to adjust the claims of capital with those of labour:—'A German baron, with whom I have the pleasure of a friendly acquaintance, has given me an outline of his arrangement with his labourers, which, as far as it is practicable, deserves much consideration, as, according to his own account, it secures their industry, fidelity, and contentment. No human arrangements are perfect, and no human laws can be framed which the ingenuity of men will not contrive to evade; but as there appears in

this plan every motive to good faith, good faith on both sides would seem to be all that is necessary to its successful operation. First, from the products of the place, the customary rent is paid, and the wages of the labour employed. The surplus remaining is then divided into five equal parts. Two of these parts are claimed by the proprietor for his skill, intelligence, and care, in the superintendence and management of the property; one part is retained as an insurance upon that part of the property which is liable to loss or destruction; one part is devoted to actual improvements upon the place; and one is divided among the labourers themselves, according to the rate of wages which they receive for their work. Whether these proportions are properly adjusted or not, I shall leave to the judgment of my readers. It is obvious that any others might be adopted which should be deemed more just. It is certainly an approach to an equitable arrangement, and my friend assures me that it works well. He says he leaves his estate at any time with a perfect confidence that his interests will be cared for and protected, and that there will be no waste of time, and no squandering of property, and no neglect of duty. Success is, in proportion, as much the interest of the labourers as of the proprietor.

This gentleman, who has three hundred men in his employment, says the system 'works well; and that every year's experience gives him stronger confidence in its justice and advantages. First, his work is done; secondly, it is done in the best manner in which his labourers are able to execute it, because it is the interest of all that it should be done, and well done. The labourers have a system of rules and fines among themselves, always subject to his approbation, and, after being once approved, always rigidly enforced. They inquire, of their own accord, into the best methods of doing what is to be done; they point out mistakes which have been committed, and improvements which may be made, subject always to his judgment. If men are found unskilful or incompetent in the particular branch of duty assigned them, he is advised of it, and persons more suitable are selected by their judgment who best understand the capacities of their fellow-labourers for the work. They are held jointly responsible for any injury to the property, unless the offending person is found. An individual guilty of any neglect of duty, or any improper conduct, or any violation of the established rules, is mulcted in a pecuniary fine. The names of the offenders are always announced at the close of the year; and these fines go towards a general entertainment and festivity. The proprietor himself hears all complaints; and a labourer, whose bad habits are judged incorrigible, is discharged.'

STORY OF AN EDINBURGH SEDAN-CARRIER.

At the corners of some of the principal streets of Edinburgh there may be seen little groups of message-carriers and sedan-carriers, rather rough-looking fellows in general, as might be expected from the exposure they undergo, but always decently dressed, and universally reputed to be steady and trusty to a remarkable degree. For the most part these men are natives of the Highlands. The services which their forefathers paid to chieftains as gillies and as soldiers, they now are willing to render to the public at large for a regular scale of charges. Thus it happens, in many instances, that an industrious *writer*, of the blood of Maccalainmore or the Siol Tormid, carrying on business in Castle Street or Queen Street, will have his papers carried daily to the Parliament House by a scion of one who bore his ancestor's standard in battle three centuries ago; or that a young beauty, of the house of MacLaughlan or Mackenzie, is borne to the Assembly Rooms in a chair by the descendants of those whose proud charge it was to carry her forefathers through floods or

quagmires in the days prior to General Wade. Now-a-days, chair-carrying is a much-reduced business, in consequence of the prevalence of hackney-chaises: only a few old ladies stick by them, much like Caxon's three customers in the Antiquary. Eighty years ago it was different. Edinburgh being then only an assemblage of alleys, and these huddled within narrow space, the chair was almost the sole vehicle for the convenience of evening visiting for both sexes. Still, however, the street-messengers and chairmen, taken together, form a conspicuous feature in the active life of the Edinburgh streets.

It is now a century since a member of this fraternity went through a series of extraordinary adventures, which have given his name a place in history. Ned Burke was a native of North Uist in the Hebrides, the son of a poor man, whose grandfather or great-grandfather had come from Ireland to settle in that island. Ned never learned to read or write, nor was he able to speak a word of English till he was upwards of thirty years of age. After passing several years in the service of various gentlemen, and thus acquiring some knowledge of the world, he became a chairman or sedan-carrier in Edinburgh. In the year 1745 he had again attached himself to a single master; he now served Mr Alexander Macleod, advocate, a near relative of the chief of that name. This gentleman joined the army of Prince Charles, to whom he acted as aid-de-camp. Ned was thus led into what was called the Rebellion.

At the conclusion of the battle of Culloden, when the prince was obliged to leave the field, Ned Burke had the duty assigned to him of conducting his royal highness away, and guiding him through the country. For this he was well qualified, by the knowledge which he had acquired in the course of his services with various Highland gentlemen. He led the prince and his party westward for many miles, till, in the middle of the night, they arrived at Invergarry, a deserted mansion, where they were glad to rest without any suitable accommodations. Here, next day, Charles disguised himself in Ned's coat, that he might the better make his way to the west coast. They proceeded along the glens, and over vast mountains, till at length they reached one of the inlets of the Atlantic, on which they set sail in an open boat. A week from Culloden saw Charles lodged in a cow-house, in the desolate island of Benbecula, with only two or three friends, and poor Ned Burke as his sole attendant. They were buffeted about the Western Islands for some weeks, enduring all kinds of hardships and privations, and under the greatest danger for their lives. At this time Ned had only to go to some station of the enemy, seldom far off, and give information of his master's hiding-place, in order to secure the sum of thirty thousand pounds, which would have made him as great as the demigod his chief; but it does not appear that the faintest idea of such treachery ever entered the mind of this simple child of nature.

In the wretched outcast life which the party led, skulking in creeks of desert islands, exposed to the weather by night and day, often at a loss for the simplest necessities of life, the prince, as is well known, never lost his good spirits. On the contrary, the cheerfulness with which he submitted to, and endeavoured to make the best of everything, was the wonder of his companions, as well as a great support to them. Ned had the duty of arranging and preparing such victuals as they possessed. That is to say, he prepared them as far as any means of preparation existed in those miserable circumstances. Charles, however, finding Burke not over-keen in his ways of managing food, entered into the business himself, and then they became, as it were, joint cooks. A cake made by the prince with the brains of a cow, was afterwards spoken of by the individuals of the party as an unusually great treat.

On another occasion, Ned, having dressed some fish, regretted there was no butter. 'We'll take the fish till the butter come,' said the prince. Afterwards, remembering there was some butter among their stores, Ned went for it, but found it jammed amongst fragments of bread. He was about to give up the notion of using it, when Charles pointed out to him that the bread, being clean itself, could not make the butter dirty; and then he made sauce with it for the fish.

Burke afterwards related some curious particulars of what occurred when he was in the prince's company. Charles having killed a deer, Ned brought it home, and, making ready some collops, there comes a poor boy, who, without asking questions, put his hand among the meat, which the cook (Edward Burke) seeing, gave him a whip with the back of his hand. The prince, observing this, said, 'Oh, man, you don't remember the Scripture, which commands to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. You ought rather to give him meat than a stripe.' The prince then ordered some rags of clothes for the boy, and said he would pay for them; which was done accordingly. The prince added more, saying, 'I cannot see a Christian perish for want of food and raiment, had I the power to support them.' Then he prayed that God might support the poor and needy, &c.* This boy made a bad return for the kindness of the prince. He gave information against him to the militia, but fortunately was disbelieved.

Ned used to play 'antics and monkey tricks,' to divert Charles and his friends in their distresses. His simplicity, and the singular circumstances of the party, enabled the poor fellow to speak to his superiors with the utmost possible freedom, without giving any offence. According to the report of a boatman who was of the party, 'Ned was always the rough man. I have seen him frequently at "Deil speed the lears!" with the prince, who humoured the joke so well, that they would have *flitten together like two nail-wives* [scolded like two herb-women], which made the company to laugh and be merry, when otherwise they would have been very dull.'

'One of the soles of Ned's shoes happening to come off, Ned cursed the day upon which he should be forced to go without shoes. The prince, hearing him, called to him and said, "Ned, look at me!" when (said Ned) I saw him holding up one of his feet to me, where there was deil a sole upon the shoe; and then I said, "Oh, my dear! I have nothing more to say. You have stopped my mouth indeed."

After being for two months under Burke's guidance, the prince was compelled to part with him and the rest of his little party, in order to put himself into the care of Flora Macdonald, who undertook to conduct him, in the disguise of a female servant, to the Isle of Skye. Burke then passed, a solitary fugitive, into his native island of North Uist, where he lived for seven weeks in a hill called Eval, feeding for twenty days upon nothing but dulse (a kind of sea-weed) and shellfish. The extremity of his case was great, for at that time a paper had been read in all the churches, forbidding any one to harbour, or give so much as a meal to any of the rebels, under pain of death. Oliver, a married brother of Ned, did actually, from mere fright, refuse him the least succour; whereupon Ned thought himself entitled to steal one of Oliver's sheep, and make his own use of it. On the other hand, Jacob, an unmarried brother, did all he could in Ned's behalf, encountering every hazard cheerfully ['God bless poor Jacob!'] interjects Mr Forbes. 'One night Ned, being in great misery, went to steal a boat, in order to take the sea; but some fishers being near by, and hearing a noise, came out with a force, thinking this to be an enemy. Ned was obliged to leave the boat, and take to his heels, for he had far rather have been killed

or drowned, than to be taken prisoner, because by that time it was well known he had been the prince's servant; and therefore he was afraid, if taken, they would put him to the torture, to make him tell all that he knew, and he could not bear the thoughts of doing hurt to anybody.'

Another relative was so base as give information against Ned; but luckily, like the ungrateful boy, he was not credited. One day he encountered one of the countrymen armed in behalf of the government, who at once recognised him. 'Follow me,' said the man. 'To what place am I to follow you?' 'Farther into the country.' 'Friend,' said Burke, 'have you got any to help you?' 'No;' and then he taxed Ned with having been the prince's servant. Ned answered, 'Many a prettier fellow has been his servant.' After a little more altercation, Ned drew forth a pistol, at which his friend vanished with all possible speed. He afterwards brought a party to the spot; but Burke had meanwhile hidden himself effectually. Soon after this, while concealed in a cave, and when no friend durst be seen with him, a shoemaker's wife came under cloud of night, and brought him a little food.

'A little before this, Ned had gone one day to buy a pair of shoes at Clatcharanish, when General Campbell, Captain Fergusson, and their whole force, came to the place. Ned was then in a sad perplexity, and did not well know what to do. Spying an old black coat and an old pair of breeches in the house, he put them on, hiding his own clothes under a chest, and went out at the door unconcerned. He stood a while among the men, and conversed easily with them; then, slipping by degrees out amongst them, he got to the hills to his old cave. Jacob Burke and the shoemaker's wife got his clothes (a Highland dress), and brought them to him.'

Tiring at length of this wretched life, Ned went and gave himself up to an old master, Macleod of Taliaker, who, receiving him kindly, was the means of his getting to Seaforth's country on the mainland, where he remained with his later master, the aide-de-camp, till the passing of the act of indemnity. He then returned to Edinburgh, and quietly resumed his humble duty as a sedan-carrier.

Probably it never occurred to the simple mind of Ned Burke that he had done anything more than a very plain piece of duty during the summer of 1746. If he formed any idea of a reward, it must have been of the simplest kind. Thus lightly did the honest fellow talk of the prince's obligation to him, when conversing with Mr Forbes—'If the prince do not come and see me soon, good faith, I'll go and see my daughter [alluding to the prince having adopted his name when in the female disguise], and crave her, for she has not yet paid her christening money, and as little has she paid the coat I ga'e her in her greatest need.' Ned's old companion, Donald Macleod, the boatman, spoke in high terms of him to Mr Forbes, as an honest, faithful, trusty fellow. Donald said that, 'in the event of a R—on [restoration], Ned would carry a chair no more, for he was persuaded the prince would settle a hundred pounds a-year upon Ned during life; and he could affirm it for a truth, that not any man whatsoever deserved it better.' 'Honest Ned,' says Mr Forbes, 'is not (by his own confession) much above forty years of age, and is both stout and sturdy for all he has gone through.'

Alas! Burke was not long to survive these perilous adventures. He died in Edinburgh on the 23d November 1751. Mr Forbes inserts in his manuscript the following epitaph for the worthy sedan-carrier:—'To perpetuate the memory of Edward Burke. Born in a humble cottage, and of mean parents, in the island of North Uist; ignorant of the first principles of human learning; doomed to converse with lowly people; and exposed to all the various temptations of poverty. Happy in these disadvantages, since thereby his genuine worth was the more conspicuous! Fidelity and disinterested friendship eclipsed his other virtues. Let the venial tribe behold and admire, and blush, if yet a blush re-

* The writer here transcribes from a report of Burke's adventures with the prince, taken from Ned's own mouth in September 1747, by the Rev. Mr Forbes, Episcopal minister at Leith. What follows is taken from other manuscripts of Mr Forbes, in possession of the writer, and is here printed for the first time.

mains! Learn by his example, oh, ye great! He preferred a good conscience to thirty thousand pounds!

One cannot but seriously ask if the age of Walpole is not somewhat redeemed by its being also the age of *NED BURKE* the SEDAN-CARRIER.

THE 'DWARF-NATION' IDEA.

THE world has long been haunted with the idea that somewhere in Africa there is a nation of Tom Thumbs. The common report of ancient writers placed their habitat on the shores of the Red Sea; but as European knowledge advanced, it has been shifted by degrees, till now it is fixed on the south of Kuffah, the most southern province of Abyssinia. In the middle ages, when the attention of Europe was absorbed by the further East, the seat of the pigmies was transferred for a time to India. This seemed as likely a domicile as any; for it was recollected that the first Greek visitors had found in the Punjab a people eight feet high, and another with only one eye—the latter, in order to make up for the deficiency, being provided with a pendulous ear, long enough to be used for wiping their faces like a handkerchief. Travellers, accordingly, received well-authenticated accounts of the existence of a nation of dwarfs on the Indian continent, and others, more fortunate, actually saw them. Oederic is satisfied with describing them from report; but the less credulous Mandeville only believed his own eyes.

The interest of Europe was of course mightily roused by the confirmation of so ancient a tradition, and it waited with much anxiety for the arrival of a specimen of the diminutive people. And the specimen came. And not one alone, but many. Dwarfs became a staple article of commerce; and if they had only been living, they might have been the progenitors of a nation of their size nearer us than Abyssinia. But the dwarfs imported from India were defunct—dried, stuffed, and spiced; Lilliputian mummies, in short, intended to grace the cabinets and museums of the learned and the curious. Perhaps, in process of time, it excited some surprise, as well as discontent, that there was not one living specimen among them. Perhaps the humanity-mongers of that day got up an agitation about the impropriety of killing little men for exportation; but so it was, that the small shrivelled anatomies came to be looked upon with some reserve, till the trade was finally stopped by the following bulletin from the Venetian traveller, Marco Polo:—

'But you must know that those who bring the little men from India practise a great deception. I assure you the figures to which they give the name are manufactured in this island in this following manner:—There is a species of small monkey, with a face resembling the human, which they catch, skin, and shave off the hair, except on the beard and chin; having thus moulded them into a human semblance, they dry and preserve them with camphor and other articles. But it is a gross deception; for neither in India nor in any other country, however savage, are there men so small as these pretended ones.'

This acute old traveller, however, was thought to carry his disbelief too far. It was very well to set people right as to the non-existence of a dwarf nation in India, especially after everybody had become tired of the nasty little anatomies; but to throw discredit upon the whole pigmy race—to turn all history into a fable—was a scepticism nothing less than profane. Marco Polo, therefore, was believed when he related what he knew of his own knowledge, but disbelieved when he dogmatised in other matters; and the ethnologists once more turned their eyes upon Africa, in the hope of finding, in some oasis of its vast wildernesses, a nation of human beings at the most three feet high.

Towards the close of the seventeenth century, Ludolph the learned Orientalist appears to confound, in some extraordinary way, the pigmy with the monkey tribe. In his history he calls them dwarfs, but de-

scribes them as apes; and yet, in a note on his map of Ethiopia, he states that the king of Zingaro (a territory in Southern Abyssinia) was a monkey. De Lisle, in the following century, restores the human nature of the dwarfs, but edges them out into the wilderness beyond the most southern province of Abyssinia; and in the present century, one of our recent travellers, Major Harris, describes them (from report) with some minuteness in his 'Highlands of Ethiopia.' 'Both sexes,' says he, 'go perfectly naked, and have thick pouting lips, diminutive eyes, and flat noses. . . . they are ignorant of the use of fire . . . fruits are their principal food; and to obtain these, women as well as men ascend the trees in numbers, and in their quarrels and scrambles not unfrequently throw each other from the branches. . . . They have no king, no laws, no arts, no arms, possess neither flocks nor herds, are not hunters, do not cultivate the soil, but subsist entirely upon fruits, roots, mice, reptiles, ants, and honey.'

Mr Johnston, in his travels in Southern Abyssinia, points out the applicability of this description to the monkey tribe, and ridicules the idea of expecting to find a new variety of the human race in the deserts of Africa. He concedes, however, that this monkey may be of a family admitting of more complete domestication than usual, and supposes that it may be identical with the house-monkey of the Egyptians, which was accustomed to gather fruit for its masters, and perform other menial offices. But we would remark that the dwarfish size of the supposed pigmy people is against this supposition rather than otherwise; for the Egyptian monkeys, at least as represented in their sculptures, were in general strapping personages, somewhere about eight feet high.

It was not wonderful that Ludolph should have taken little pains to discriminate between men and monkeys; for in his time the notion was current even among the learned, such as Monbodo and Rousseau, that the two were of the same species, and that their moral and physical differences were the result of circumstances. Even Buffon declares, that if our judgment was limited to figure alone, the ape should be regarded as a variety of the human species. Before these great writers, Bontius, the chief Dutch physician of Batavia, described them as wanting nothing of humanity but the faculty of speech. Their females, he assures us, had even a sense of modesty. Linnaeus likewise gave an account of a Javan ape which it would be difficult to distinguish from a man. As for Aristotle, he looked upon the pigmy as a connecting link between the human and brute kind, partaking of the nature of both.

The grand difficulty about the African nation of dwarfs is the fact, that not a single specimen has been seen either in Abyssinia or Egypt. The reason given for this is a very lame one—that the little men are so useful as slaves where they are caught, that not one of them is sold out of the country. The same thing might have been alleged of the Indian pigmies we have mentioned, but it was seen that the excuse would not answer; and thus the curiosity of the savans of Europe was obliged to be satisfied with pickled monkeys. But it must be observed that those who deny the existence of a race of little men, by no means dispute that of a nation of slave monkeys. Mr Johnston himself contends that their non-appearance in the neighbouring countries, into which slaves are carried, *proves* them to be merely a more sagacious kind of ape; and he refers to the practice of the ancient Egyptians in calling to their aid such a species of animal-servants. The apes of the Egyptians, however, we repeat, were not of the pigmy kind. They resembled more the famous warriors of Ceylon; and are sometimes represented in the sculptures of Upper Nubia, as they are in the caves of Ellora, in the employment of drawing cars yoked with horses.

It must be admitted, however, that the monkeys of India have either been somewhat exaggerated in the sacred poems, or that their descendants have greatly

degenerated. When they undertook to assist Ram in recovering his wife Seeta from the demon-king of Ceylon, they carried with them sundry fragments of the Himalaya for the purpose of constructing a bridge across the strait to the island; but on learning that Ram had managed the affair without them, they dropped their burdens, and thus formed the Vindya range of mountains, some six or seven hundred miles long. But this, we apprehend, will be too much for the belief even of the believers in modern pigmies, and so we shall say nothing more about it.

Although it is difficult to believe in the existence of a pigmy nation even in Africa, where we see such grotesque varieties of the human form, we trust that, by and by, we shall have some more definite information touching the monkey tribe, who have had the folly to get themselves into slavery through a display of their reason. The gigantic black orang, described in the 'Naturalist's Library,' who attacks the elephant and lion with clubs and stones, and carries off the young negro women to the forest, like Allen-a-Dale, has no resemblance to the civilised monkey of Ethiopia. The latter is more easily identified with the smaller and gentler kind of the same family; but even these, we are sorry to say, get speedily addicted to the bottle when temptation comes in their way. The orang-outang of Borneo, described by Dr Abel, exhibits a greater appearance of consanguinity; but if the learned naturalist intends to draw a general portrait, we must protest against his assertion that the creature is utterly incapable of walking in an erect posture, and that his arms, like the fore-legs of other animals, are requisite to support his body. Mr Earl, a later visitor, saw one in the same island, who walked about habitually on his hind-legs, and only took to all-fours when alarmed. This creature was extremely gentle, completely devoid of monkey mischief; and when playing with children, which he was very fond of doing, 'might be seen running after them with his eyes shut and his arms spread out like a child playing at blind-man's-buff.' Another observed by the same gentleman was only eight months old, and presented, at a little distance, a perfect resemblance to a negro child, more especially when its nurse had tied a napkin before it, and was feeding it with a spoon. It crawled about on all-fours like an infant of the same age, and never appeared so happy as when rolling on the floor, hugging a towel or a piece of cloth.

Dr Abel's orang ate all kinds of food, and drank wine and spirits, although he preferred beer and milk. He neither practised the grimaces and antics of other monkeys, nor possessed their perpetual proneness to mischief. He was grave and melancholy both in aspect and disposition, was sensible of gratitude and friendship, and on board ship was fond of sitting at his cabin-door enjoying his coffee, 'quite unembarrassed by those who observed him, and with a grotesque and sober air that seemed a burlesque on human nature.' Our philosopher, however, had some vanity. He was obviously ashamed of being caught playing with the other monkeys on board with the *abandon* he gave way to with the boys of the ship. These, on the other hand, who were of a smaller species, had not sense enough to make distinctions. They saw no difference between their grand friend, now that he was an inmate of the cabin and the companion of human beings, than when he climbed trees instead of masts, and cracked nuts and jokes with his comrades of the woods. The very first time they set eyes on him, they flew upon him with a vulgar heartiness which greatly disconcerted his new dignity, even while it gratified his simian nature; and after that, he was seen to compound between the two sets of feelings, by treating them with reserve and hauteur in public, and having a desperate game with them in the rigging when the decks were clear.

There is no doubt that it would be highly gratifying to a practical age like this, if we could turn such exuberance of animal energy as is displayed by these creatures to some useful account; and for this reason

we confess we are greatly taken with Mr Johnston's idea of a nation of slave-monkeys. But that gentleman, while puffing away the pigmy dream, which was perhaps one of the last lingering superstitions of travel, replaces it with another, of which we admit we can make neither head nor tail. Hear his own words:—

'Nothing can be positively asserted, but I believe myself that we are on the eve of a most interesting ethnological and geographical discovery, that will at once afford a solution to all the strange and improbable accounts which have reached us respecting the inhabitants of Central Africa. What we hear of dwarfs, cannibals, and communities of monkeys, may perhaps prove to be merely a muddled stream of information, conveyed to us through the medium of ignorant and barbarous tribes, but which may have some foundation of an unexpected character, in the existence of a nation in this situation, which, almost physically separated from the rest of the world by impassable deserts and unnavigable rivers, has continued in its original integrity that perfect condition of society which, once general, then almost extinguished, evidently preceded the barbarism from which the present transition state has emerged, and which I believe to be gradually progressing to the re-attainment of the previous excellence of the primeval social institutions.'

This is a strain beyond Rousseau. The arts and sciences, of what we foolishly call civilisation, but which is, in reality, a departure from it, are to be flung to the winds; and mankind, after four thousand years of error, are to return to that blessed state of primeval excellence which is described to be the present position of the nation of monkeys. The story of the pigmy tribe was nothing to this; and we do hope that, when our author stumbles upon his model people in some oasis of the African desert, he will at least send home a few of them, skinned and pickled, for the gratification of our barbarian curiosity.

A SUGGESTION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE WORKING-CLASSES.

A GENTLEMAN of literary and scientific attainments, who has had opportunities of studying the habits of working-men, invites our attention to a scheme of improvement, which he thinks has not yet been generally attempted. After advertising to the establishment of libraries and reading-rooms, he proceeds as follows:—

'There can be no doubt that the diffusion of a taste for literature by these means may greatly contribute to eradicate gross vice and intemperance; but to this many obstacles stand in the way. One of the most serious is the imperfect education of the working-classes, even in the mere elements of reading. They have, in general, spent but a short time at school, and the art, but imperfectly learned there, has subsequently been almost forgotten. To many, reading is as simple as speaking or listening; the eye catches the form of the words as readily as the ear would do their sound. But with the partially-educated the case is very different. They read slowly, and with difficulty; the words must be spelt out by letters and syllables; and so imperfectly are they even then recognised, that they must be pronounced aloud before they can be understood. Many persons have remarked this habit of the half-educated without inquiring into the cause, which, there is little doubt, is that now mentioned. Can it be wondered at that people in such circumstances are not fond of reading? We might rather expect that they should never open a book, than that they should have recourse to them habitually for instruction and amusement. It is only the few in whom the desire of knowledge burns strong, who combat against this difficulty till they succeed in overcoming it. With the great majority, it cou-

times to render information in print little more than a scaled book, and deprives them almost entirely of the advantages which the great diffusion of cheap literature opens to all classes.

A better and more extensive system of education will remedy this evil among the rising generation, but can effect little with those already grown up to manhood, and engaged in all the toil and drudgery of life. With them other means must be taken of bringing knowledge to their door, and introducing among them higher thoughts and purer desires. Now, I conceive that this end might be attained by short lectures or addresses on interesting subjects, delivered in a plain and familiar style. Of course these lectures would need to be gratis—open to all without fee or reward. The taste for such things is now dormant, and it must be first awakened before we can expect men to make any sacrifice of their money to gratify it. It would be a great matter could these men be got to attend, and to take an interest in the subject of the lecture. But that they would do this, if not universally at first, at least in gradually-increasing numbers, I entertain no doubt.

The success of popular lectures in towns where there are enough of persons able to pay for them, gives reason to expect that they would be no less successful among the poorer classes, if brought equally within their reach. The crowds who, on Sunday evenings, flock to church, instead of employing themselves with a book at home, shows how much more willing the majority are to listen than to be at the trouble of reading for themselves. I have little doubt, also, that they profit more by it. The words are given to them with the proper force and emphasis, and sentences are thus fully understood and come home to the heart, which, if read in a book, would have been dark and obscure to nine out of ten of the audience. Any one who has ever listened to a street preacher, and observed the eager attention of the crowd around, will need nothing more to convince him of the superior energy and efficacy of the spoken word.

It is on these grounds that I think much might be done to improve the condition of the labouring-classes, and to raise their character, by a system of oral instruction. Let men be sent to address them at their leisure hours, in a plain and intelligible style, on subjects of general interest to them, and we have no doubt that the good effect on their morals and habits would be speedily seen. They would no longer need to fly to the alehouse to relieve the tedium of an idle hour, and they would be supplied with other subjects of conversation than those in which they now are almost forced to indulge. But we would take a lesson from Knox and the old reformers, and, when speakers were not to be had, employ readers. Let some book or periodical of an amusing and instructive nature be chosen, and a person appointed to read it aloud at a certain convenient time and place, and we have no fear of his not finding an audience. The newspapers of the day would undoubtedly prove the most attractive reading, but many difficulties would stand in the way of adopting them for this purpose. But there is a wide field of other literature well-fitted for this purpose, which needs not be specified here, and which men of all parties might approve. In this manner the thinking powers of the people would be awakened, their desire to improve their condition strengthened, the means of doing this shown to them, and the attractions of gross vice and sensuality weakened and destroyed. Besides this, much information useful to the men in their ordinary employments might be communicated, rendering their labours more pleasant to themselves and more profitable to the public.

It is hardly necessary to remark that we cordially approve of the plan of gratuitous reading and lecturing, with the view of reaching large masses who habitually shrink from private study; but the difficulty of finding the pecuniary means, must inevitably prevent its execution on anything like a permanent or universal scale,

unless the more advanced of the operative classes take upon themselves the duty of reading and lecturing, and of otherwise encouraging a systematic course of mutual instruction. Already, we are glad to say, some excellent Mutual Instruction Societies are in operation.

LITERARY RELICS.

THE universal reverence entertained for men of genius causes their residences, and every little thing belonging to them, to be regarded with an unusual degree of interest. Hence it is that relics of them—their autographs, pens, snuff-boxes, and other articles—are so eagerly sought after, and so highly prized. The neighbourhoods in which they dwell are wandered through with greater delight than others more beautiful or striking, but not so renowned. 'There is a charm,' as Washington Irving observes, 'about the spot that has been printed by the footsteps of departed beauty, and consecrated by the inspirations of the poet, which is heightened rather than impaired by the lapse of ages. It is, indeed, the gift of poetry to hallow every place in which it moves, to breathe round nature an odour more exquisite than the perfume of the rose, and to shed over it a tint more magical than the blush of morning.'

The house in which Milton resided between the years 1651 and 1659 still exists at 18 York Street, Westminster. Jeremy Bentham, to whom the house lately belonged, put up a tablet on the back wall (believed to have been the front in the poet's time), inscribed, 'Sacred to Milton, prince of poets.' This habitation, wherein part of 'Paradise Lost' was undoubtedly composed, is now let out to two or three poor families, the ground-floor being converted into a chandler's shop. From the parlour windows the poet could have commanded a fine view of St James's Park, more picturesque then than at present. At Chalfont, in Buckinghamshire, is another residence of Milton, in which he composed 'Paradise Regained.' Though the pear-tree said to have been planted by Cromwell in the garden of Sidney College, Cambridge, was cut down in March 1833, the mulberry-tree planted by his illustrious Latin secretary, Milton, has been more fortunate, still flourishing in the pleasant garden of Christ's College, where it was planted by the youthful student. Some years ago it suffered considerably from a violent gale of wind, which sadly shattered it; but its aged boughs are now carefully propped up, and its trunk protected by a partial covering of lead. With these aids, it promises to look green for many years to come. Its fertility appears to have undergone no change; in the summer it is laden with fruit, of which more than two bushels of the finest flavour were gathered in the season of 1835. The smallest fragments from this tree are religiously cherished by the poet's numberless admirers. In August 1790, when Milton's coffin was discovered buried under the desk in the chancel of the church of St Giles, Cripplegate, some friends of the overseer contrived, at night-time, to possess themselves of the hair and some of the teeth of the immortal poet.

In the park at Penshurst Castle, Kent, stands a famous oak, said to have been planted at the birth of Sir Philip Sidney.

'What genius points to yonder oak?
What rapture does my soul provoke?
There let me hang a garland high,
There let my Muse her accents try:
Be there my earliest homage paid,
Be there my latest vigils made;
For thou wast planted in the earth
The day that shone on Sidney's birth.'

In the grounds of Abbington Abbey, Northamptonshire, stands Garrick's mulberry-tree, with this inscription upon copper attached to one of its limbs:—'This tree was planted by David Garrick, Esquire, at the request of Ann Thurstay, as a growing testimony of their friendship, 1778.'

Henry Kirke White's favourite tree, whereon he had cut 'H. K. W., 1805,' stood on the sands at Whitton, in Northumberland, till it was cut down by the woodman's axe; but, in veneration for the poet's memory, the portion bearing his initials was carefully preserved in an elegant gilt frame.

An English traveller, desirous of possessing a memorial of Madame de Sévigné, purchased for the sum of eighteen thousand francs the staircase of her chateau at Provence.

Sir Isaac Newton's solar dial, which was cut in stone,

and attached to the manor-house of Woolthorpe, Lincolnshire, is now placed in the Royal Society's collection.

Some years ago, a curious arm-chair which had belonged to Gay the poet was sold by public auction at Barnstable, his native place. It contained a drawer underneath the seat, at the extremity of which was a smaller private drawer, connected with a rod in front, by which it was drawn out.

Benjamin Franklin's 'fine crab-tree walking-stick, with a gold head curiously wrought in the form of the cap of liberty,' is bequeathed, in a codicil to his will, 'to the friend of mankind, General Washington;' adding, that 'if it were a sceptre, he has merited it, and would become it.'

Thorpe's 'Catalogue of Autographs' (1843) includes a letter from a Miss Smith of Arundale, forwarding to the Earl of Buchan 'a chip taken from the coffin of the poet Burns, when his body was removed from his first grave to the mausoleum erected to his memory in St Michael's churchyard, Dumfries.'

The tower of Montbard, in Burgundy, was Buffon's study, and, together with the gardens in which the great naturalist used to recreate himself, is religiously kept up by the inhabitants.

Pope's house at Binfield has been pulled down, but the poet's parlour still exists as a part of the present mansion erected on the spot. A patch of the great forest near Binfield has been honourably preserved, under the name of Pope's Wood. His house at Twickenham is gone, the garden is bare, and in disorder; but the celebrated grotto remains, stripped, however, of all that gave it picturesqueness, grace, and seclusion.

Cowper's house at Olney is still standing in the same ruinous state so humorously described by the poet: his parlour is occupied as a girl's school. The summer-house in the garden, wherein he used to sit conning his verses, also remains, its walls covered with visitors' names. His residence in the neighbouring village of Weston has been much altered, but is still beautiful, with a profusion of roses in front.

Goldsmith's cottage at Kilburn, wherein he wrote the 'Vicar of Wakefield' and the 'Deserted Village,' was pulled down a few years since, to make way for new buildings.

EXTRAORDINARY CASE OF 'STRIKE.'

WE cannot refrain from uniting in the regret generally expressed by the press respecting certain occurrences which have lately taken place in relation to a strike among a number of workmen at Belfast. The following is the account given by the newspapers of this remarkable and lamentable case of attempted coercion. 'A few days ago, eleven mechanics and iron moulders, in the employment of Messrs Combe and Dunville, of the Falls Foundry, Belfast, were tried at the Belfast quarter-sessions for illegally conspiring and combining to injure Messrs Combe and Co. in their business, by using force, threats, and intimidation to prevent divers persons from working for that firm. The prisoners all pleaded "Not guilty," and the greatest excitement prevailed throughout the trial. From the evidence, it appeared that Mr Combe, finding he was receiving a great deal of trouble from a union of workmen established in Belfast, brought over and employed a number of men from Scotland and England. This gave great offence to the union, which forthwith commenced tampering with the newcomers. Some were compelled to join the union by threats of danger to their lives if they refused; and others were met on their arrival by parties appointed for the purpose, who took them to dram-shops, drugged them with whisky, and then put them on board the packet, to be conveyed back to their own country. One of the new hands was told by the conspirators that they could get a man to kill him for sixpence; another of them, "that if he went to work at Messrs Combe and Company's, it might do well enough whilst it was light, but when it was dark he would run a chance of having his brains knocked out." Serious assaults were also committed by members of the union on the obnoxious parties; and ultimately, Messrs Combe and Co. were compelled, in self-defence, to indict the prisoners at the bar. After half an hour's consultation, the jury returned a verdict of "guilty" against all the prisoners, at the same time recommending them to mercy. The individual who had taken the lead in the conspiracy was sentenced to four months' imprisonment, and at the expiration of his term, to find

bail to keep the peace for three years; the other conspirators were ordered minor periods of imprisonment, and to find bail also. In this case the persons charged have been pronounced guilty by a jury of their own approval—by a jury fraudulently packed to protect them from justice. The case is one of a most monstrous kind. It appears that the sheriff, or his deputy, sent blank summonses, signed, to a common bailiff, who filled them up with the names of jurors at his pleasure; that a fellow called Hill, who keeps a low public house, came to him with a set of names which he wished to have introduced; that most of these were not on the sheriff's list, and, besides, that the jury panel had already been made out; that, however, two of the names (that of Hill being one) which were on the list, but low down, were brought up, *erasures having been made*; and all this for the purpose of serving the traversers. This fraud was detected and confessed; and the business of the sessions was abruptly brought to a close.

We sincerely trust that the trial and its painful exposures will have the effect of producing a new and better feeling between employers and employed in Belfast.

DISTORTION—A WORD TO MOTHERS.

The most common cause of a high shoulder is to be found in the abominable practice of undressing girls' necks as low as the hanging of their clothes will permit. Instead of the shoulder-straps of their dress being, as they should be, fairly above the root of the acromial processes [that is, on the centre of the shoulder], they often—indeed most commonly—either only skirt the extreme end of those processes, and rest on the rounded upper part of the deltoid muscles [resting nearly on the extreme edge of the shoulder], or are actually far down on the arms; in consequence of which, the dress having little or no suspension on the shoulders, is constantly dropping; and the girl, to save her clothes dropping down, or at least to keep them in place, is continually hitching up the shoulder, from which the shoulder-strap most easily slips, and thus the elevating muscles, becoming stronger on that side, pull the shoulder permanently up, and produce a very ugly appearance. But the mischief does not stop here! For though there really be no disease of the spine, yet this constant hitching up of the shoulder causes the head and neck to be thrown to the other side, whilst the chest is thrown out to the same side; and thus a lateral curvature of the spine is produced, and a girl's figure is spoiled, for the simple purpose of uncovring her neck and shoulders as far as possible, which, as well for decency as for the preservation of the child's health, ought to be covered. Many parents have been thus the real cause of their daughter's distortion, if not of more serious consequences; and therefore, in growing girls, who have the least disposition to slip their shoulder out of their dress, most especial care should be taken to prevent the possibility of keeping up this habit by having the dress made so high that it cannot slip down, and then, the sensation of its slipping being lost, the child no longer continues to hitch up her shoulder, and, by a little attention to her proper carriage, the mischief, if not of long standing, may be got rid of.—*Chelius's System of Surgery.*

THE DUTY OF THE HISTORIAN

Is to make us dwell with delight on the scenes of human improvement; to lessen the pleasure too naturally felt in contemplating successful courage or skill, whenever these are directed towards the injury of mankind; to call forth our scorn of perfidious actions, however successful; our detestation of cruel and bloodthirsty propensities, however powerful the talents by which their indulgence was secured. Instead of holding up to our admiration the 'pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war,' it is the historian's duty to make us regard with unceasing delight the ease, worth, and happiness of blessed peace: he must remember that

'Peace hath her victories
No less renowned than war:'

and to celebrate these triumphs, the progress of science and of art, the extension and security of freedom, the improvement of national institutions, the diffusion of general prosperity—exhausting on such pure and wholesome themes all the resources of his philosophy, all the graces of his style, giving honour to whom honour is due, withholding all incentives to misplaced interest and vicious admiration, and not merely by general remarks on men and on events, but by the manner of describing the one,

and recording the other, causing us to entertain the proper sentiments, whether of respect or of interest, or of aversion or of indifference, for the various subjects of the narration.—*Brougham's Lives of Men of Letters.*

PRIOR THE ENGRAVER.

Mr Prior has had few advantages beyond skill and perseverance. Born of humble parentage, his father died when he was very young, and his mother followed him to the grave before the son was old enough to remember much more than the constant tenderness of a mother's love. He was thus left to the care of an aunt, who watched over him with great solicitude, and whose kindness he still remembers with all the tenderness of a grateful heart. His first predilection for drawing was shown by the figures he drew on the walls of his aunt's house, and the rude outlines of trees, churches, and houses on the covers of his copy-books at school. These rude attempts at drawing attracted the attention of the Rev. William Turner of Newcastle-on-Tyne; his aunt was induced by his advice to bind him apprentice to a general engraver and printer in that town of the name of Lambart. Here he cut ciphers on silver spoons, names on dogs' collars, card plates, and invoice heads. His skill increasing, his master intrusted him with the heads of shop bills for tea-dealers—Chinamen on a stranded shore, with honey jars and tea chests, and a ship in the far distance. He had now the good fortune to form the acquaintance of a fellow engraver with a large collection of prints, some of merit, and all of a character beyond what he had as yet seen. Prints became a passion with him from this time, and he at once determined to become something more than a mere engraver of shop bills, and to try his hand in the walks of Vivares and Woollet. He copied prints, drew at home in the few leisure moments allowed him, and advanced before very long from engraving crests and the tops of spoons to works of a high calling, in which he could display the skill he had thus been toiling to acquire. As soon as his apprenticeship was over, he left Newcastle for London, and entered into the employment of the Messrs Finden. Here he acquired a further insight into his art, and succeeded in saving a little money, that he might indulge hereafter his favourite scheme of devoting his time to works of a high class only. The illustrated volumes published by Mr Virtue in Ivy Lane, found him full employment at this time; and as soon as his skill had sufficiently advanced, and his funds were on the increase, he offered the whole of his hard-earned savings to Mr J. M. W. Turner for a drawing to engrave from. He had seen Heidelberg, and, enchanted with the spot, asked Mr Turner for a sketch of the place. The drawing was made in 1838, and the engraving produced in 1846, 'and I considered,' he says, 'my collected time on it to amount to fully, or indeed over, three years. It is difficult to compute every half-hour and hour, but it has been thus long at the least.' Mr Prior's story is an interesting one, almost as much so as the early history of the poet whose name he bears.—*Jerrold's Newspaper.*

COST OF SLAVE-TRADE SUPPRESSION.

A return was lately presented to the House of Commons of the men and money expended in the crusade against the slave-trade in 1845. The average naval force kept on foot in that year for the suppression of the slave-trade was 56 ships, carrying 886 guns and 9289 men. Of these, 27 ships, with 282 guns, and 3334 men, were employed on the west coast of Africa. There were 4 fourth-rates, 2 fifth-rates, 6 sixth-rates, 28 sloops, 13 steam-vessels, 3 gun-brigs. In a note appended to the return, it is stated that 'although the above number of vessels were furnished with slave-trade instructions, yet they were only employed in cruising against slave vessels, in so far as the other duties of the stations on which they were respectively employed would permit.' The cost, 'so far as relates to the department of the accountant-general of the navy,' of the vessels employed on the west coast of Africa in 1845, was £291,501; of the vessels not employed exclusively on the west coast of Africa, £414,953; total, £706,454. The items of 'wear and tear,' 'stores,' 'coals and machinery,' amounted to £117,793 for the vessels employed exclusively on the west coast of Africa, and £126,291 for the others; a total of £244,084. The return shows that 166 officers and men died, and 104 were invalided on board the vessels employed exclusively on the west coast of Africa; and that 93 died, and 167 were invalided in the others.—*Newspaper paragraph.* [Query: the good done by this expensive naval force?]

FLOWERS AND LIFE.

BY H. G. ADAMS.

LOVELIEST of God's creations

Are the flowers that gem the earth;

In life's various relations,

'Mid its scenes of woe and mirth,

They are ever by us valued e'en as things of priceless worth.

Mark the child amid them roving

Full of innocent delight;

Mark the youth and maiden loving,

Giving to each other's sight

Those many-hued interpreters which tell their hidden thoughts aright.

When the marriage vows are spoken,

And the merry bells outring,

What so well fond hopes betoken?

What so fit can friendship bring,

To strew the path wherein the pair are newly entering?

And when lost in blissful trances,

'Neath the honeymoon they rove,

While soft looks and tender glances

Tell of confidence and love,

Flowers seem blessings scattered round them by angelic hands above.

Flowers all beauty and all sweetness!

Out, alas! that they must fade;

Earthly joy hath no completeness;

There's no sunshine without shade;

Like a blighted rose the loved one stricken is, and lowly laid!

When the funeral bell is tolling,

And the landscape looketh drear,

And adown the cheek is rolling

Sorrow's agonising tear,

Faded blossoms, hope's frail emblems, deck the coffin and the bier.

And when time hath gently chidden

Grief to something like repose,

By the voice of memory bidden,

To the tomb the mourner goes,

Pleased he sees it wreathed and covered with the violet and rose.

And amid his weeping, lowly

Bending to the verdant sod,

Thoughts come o'er him calm and holy,

And he blaseth, praiseth God

For the flowers of life that ever twine around his chattering rod.

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